

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1247

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0496

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REP ON OCTOBER 22, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN INFORMAL BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH US DEPREP ON OCTOBER 22, SOVIET REP KHLESTOV MADE RENEWED STATEMENT OF DESIRE TO MOVE THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. KHLESTOV INDICATED A CERTAIN DEGREE OF GRUDGING ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN PHASING IDEA. HE SUGGESTED THAT, IN EVENT WEST WERE WILLING TO AGREE TO ACCEPT EASTERN PROPOSAL ON NON-INCREASE OF MANPOWER DURING NEGOTIATIONS, EAST MIGHT DROP THE IDEA OF NATIONAL CEILINGS IN THIS CONTEXT AND ALSO THAT THE EAST MIGHT SUPPLY DATA FOR FREEZE. KHLESTOV STATED THAT THE REASON EAST WAS NOW PUSHING FOR A FORCE DEFINITION WHICH WOULD DIVIDE GROUND FROM AIR FORCES

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WAS THAT IT WAS CONTEMPLATING DROPPING ITS REQUIREMENT

TO REDUCE AIR FORCE MANPOWER. END SUMMARY.

2. IN DISCUSSION ON OCTOBER 22, SOVIET REP KHLESTOV TOLD US DEPREP THAT KHLESTOV HAD EARLIER SAME DAY HAD SEVERAL LONG TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS ON PRESENT STATUS OF VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS WITH HIS SUPERIORS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY IN MOSCOW. KHLESTOV SAID HE HAD REPORTED ON THE COURSE OF THE PRESENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT MOSCOW AUTHORITIES HAD APPROVED HIS CONDUCT OF THE EASTERN POSITION. THEY HAD ASKED HIM WHETHER THERE WERE SIGNS THAT THE WEST WOULD TABLE A PROPOSAL FOR NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS. THEY HAD EXPRESSED THE EXPECTATION THAT THE WEST WOULD MAKE SUCH A MOVE DURING THE PRESENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS, PRIOR TO MID-DECEMBER. KHLESTOV SAID HE TOLD THEM THAT HE DID NOT THINK THE WEST WOULD MOVE ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE PRESENT ROUND. KHLESTOV ASKED US DEPREP WHETHER KHLESTOV'S ESTIMATE OR MOSCOW ESTIMATE OF TIMING WAS CORRECT. US DEPREP SAID NATO WAS DISCUSSING VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES, NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN, BUT THAT THE OBVIOUS WAY TO MOVE THE NEGOTIATIONS ALONG WAS FOR THE EAST TO SHOW SOME REAL FLEXIBILITY.

3. KHLESTOV SAID HE REALLY WANTED TO MOVE THE VIENNA TALKS ALONG. HE BELIEVED HE HAD GOOD SUPPORT IN MOSCOW FOR THIS ALTHOUGH THERE WAS THE USUAL BUREAUCRATIC SNIPING AND CHORUS OF DOUBTERS. HE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TRYING TO FIGURE OUT MOVES THAT COULD GET THINGS STARTED. PERHAPS ONE COULD TAKE ONE OF THE VARIOUS INDIVIDUAL SUGGESTIONS THE SOVIETS HAD PUT FORWARD AND DEVELOP IT FURTHER IN A WAY WHICH WOULD MAKE IT MORE PALATABLE TO THE WEST.

4. KHLESTOV SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT, EVEN IF MODIFIED THE EASTERN IDEA OF A SMALL FIRST STEP REDUCTION WITH REDUCTIONS BY ALL PARTICIPANTS WOULD SELL WITH THE WEST. HE INDICATED THAT HE WAS GRADUALLY BECOMING CONVINCED THAT THE FRG WOULD MAINTAIN ITS REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN A FIRST REDUCTION. THEREFORE THIS ROAD DID NOT APPEAR PRODUCTIVE. KHLESTOV THEN ASKED US DEPREP WHAT LATTER THOUGHT OF POSSIBILITY FOR DEVELOPING THE EASTERN PROPOSAL FOR A NO-INCREASE COMMITMENT ON MANPOWER FOR THE PERIOD OF THE
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NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID THAT FOR THIS PURPOSE, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE EAST TO DROP THE NATIONAL CEILING ASPECT. US DEPREP RAISED THE DATA ISSUE. KHLESTOV SAID IT MIGHT ALSO BE POSSIBLE TO GIVE DATA TOTALS FOR THE FORCES OF BOTH SIDES IN THE EVENT OF WESTERN AGREEMENT TO A FREEZE PROPOSAL.

5. US DEPREP SAID THAT THIS STILL WAS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

BECAUSE FOR THE WEST TO ENTER UPON ANY TYPE OF FORCE AGREEMENT BASED ON ACCEPTANCE OF THE CURRENT DISPARITY WOULD SERIOUSLY PREJUDICE THE WESTERN CASE FOR GROUND FORCE PARITY.

6. KHESTOV THEN ASKED WHY WEST HAD NOT EXTENDED THE COMMON CEILING TO COVER AIR FORCE MANPOWER. FROM THE WESTERN VIEWPOINT, THIS, AFTER ALL, WOULD BE THE LOGICAL WAY FOR THE WEST TO APPROACH THE MANPOWER ISSUE. US DEPREP SAID THIS WAS A THOUGHT ONE MIGHT THINK OF FURTHER. KHESTOV COMMENTED THAT IN THE PRESENT DEFINITIONS DISCUSSION, THE WEST SHOULD DEFINITELY AGREE ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE SAME TYPE OF FORCES SHOULD BE ALLOCATED TO THE SAME SERVICE. US DEPREP POINTED OUT THAT EVEN IF ONE AGREED TO THIS PRINCIPLE, ACCORDING TO KHESTOV'S OWN EARLIER STATMENTS, THE PRINCIPLE COULD BE APPLIED IN ANY ONE OF SEVERAL WAYS. KHESTOV AGREED THAT HIS PRINCIPLE COULD BE APPLIED IN FIVE OR SIX DIFFERENT WAYS. BUT THE WEST SHOULD ADMIT THE PRINCIPLE. HE SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THIS LOGICAL AND EQUITABLE CONCEPT WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE WEST. USDEPREP SAID THAT NATO AUTHORITIES WERE OPPOSED TO AGREEING ON VERBAL FORMULAS WHICH WOULD HAVE EFFECTS ON FORCE LEVELS UNTIL THEY HAD A CLEAR IDEA OF THE DATA BACKGROUND OF THESE POSSIBLE CHANGES.

7. KHESTOV SAID MOSCOW AUTHORITIES HAD ESTABLISHED THE PRECONDITIONS FOR DATA EXCHANGE: FIRST, AN AGREED SOLUTION TO THE QUESTION OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET, AND SECOND, AN AGREED SOLUTION TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED. MOSCOW AUTHORITIES "COULD NOT UNDERSTAND" ANY OTHER APPROACH TO THIS QUESTION. US DEPREP ASKED KHESTOV, WHAT ABOUT LATTER'S PROPOSAL FOR A NO-INCREASE AGREEMENT BASED ON DATA? KHESTOV SHRUGGED,

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AND SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONVINCE MOSCOW AUTHORITIES INCLUDING MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION ON THE DATA ISSUE.

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 EB-07 ERDE-00 ERDA-05

CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

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8. US DEPREP ASKED KHLESTOV, LEAVING ASIDE THE ISSUE OF WHEN A DATA EXCHANGE COULD TAKE PLACE, WAS THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE FORCE TOTALS THE WEST HAD PROVIDED AND SOVIET TOTALS A LARGE ONE. KHLESTOV REPLIED THAT THE DISCREPANCY WAS NOT LARGE.

9. US DEPREP ASKED KHLESTOV WHY, GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE SOVIET REDUCTION PROGRAM, THE EAST FOUND IT NECESSARY OR DESIRABLE TO DIVIDE FORCES INTO GROUND AND AIR FORCES. KHLESTOV STATED FLATLY THAT THIS WAS BECAUSE THE SOVIETS MIGHT MOVE TO A POSITION DROPPING THEIR PREVIOUS REQUIREMENT FOR REDUCTION OF AIR FORCE MANPOWER. THE SOVIET MILITARY HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE WEST WOULD NEVER AGREE TO REDUCING AIR FORCE MANPOWER. SO, DROPPING THIS REQUIREMENT WAS ONE POSITION HE MIGHT ADVANCE, ALTHOUGH NO DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN. US DEPREP SAID THERE
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WOULD FOR OBVIOUS REASONS BE RESISTANCE IN THE WEST TO REDUCING THE SIZE OF THE DISPARITY TO BE TAKEN BY THE EAST THROUGH MOVING PERSONNEL FROM GROUND TO AIR FORCES. KHLESTOV SAID HE COULD UNDERSTAND THIS PERFECTLY WELL, BUT, AS FAR AS THE POLISH AND CZECHOSLOVAK GROUND BASED AIR

DEFENSE PERSONNEL WERE CONCERNED PUTTING THEM IN THE AIR FORCE WITH SIMILAR NATO PERSONNEL WAS A MATTER OF SIMPLE EQUITY, WHATEVER THE EFFECTS ON DATA, AND THE EAST WOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DO BUSINESS ON ANY OTHER BASIS.

10. KHLESTOV RETURNED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE. HE SAID HE EXPECTED A WESTERN MOVE, IF NOT IN THIS ROUND, THEN IN THE NEXT. HE SAID SOME OFFICIALS ON THE EASTERN SIDE, IN PLANNING A POSSIBLE EASTERN REACTION, WANTED TO FOLLOW THE COURSE OF BELITTLING THE WESTERN OFFER. BUT HE WAS RECOMMENDING THAT THE EAST REACT POSITIVELY AND ALSO MAKE SOME SPECIFIC RESPONSE IN RETURN. THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT HE WAS GIVING ADVANCE APPROVAL TO THE CONTENT OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL, WHENEVER IT MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING, BUT HE WAS SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN ADVANCING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THOUGHT A POSITIVE WESTERN MOVE SHOULD RECEIVE A POSITIVE EASTERN RESPONSE. THEN SOME MOMENTUM MIGHT BE GENERATED.

11. KHLESTOV EXPRESSED SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRESENT DELEGATIONS IN WHICH HE AND SOVIET DEPREP SMIRNOVSKY USUALLY PARTICIPATE AND SUGGESTED THAT, IN FUTURE, MILITARY ADVISERS SHOULD BE INCLUDED.

12. COMMENT: KHLESTOV WAS SPEAKING VERY OPENLY AND SHOULD NOT BE QUOTED TO FOREIGNERS. THIS CONVERSATION SHOWS ONCE AGAIN, WE BELIEVE ACCURATELY, THAT KHLESTOV HAS A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. IT INDICATES THAT KHLESTOV IS CONTINUING TO SHOW SOME GIVE ON PHASING, CORROBORATES WHAT KHLESTOV SAID TO FRG REP EARLIER THIS ROUND AS REGARDS TEMPORARY RELINQUISHMENT OF NATIONAL CEILINGS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EASTERN FREEZE PROPOSAL (MBFR VIENNA A-148), AND MOVES ONE STEP FURTHER TO SUGGEST THE POSSIBILITY OF DATA EXCHANGE IN THIS CONTEXT.

13. THESE MOVES CONFORM TO PREDICTIONS OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTERN POSITION MADE AT THE TIME WHEN THE EASTERN
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FREEZE PROPOSAL WAS PUT FORWARD. THEY APPEAR TO REPRESENT KHLESTOV'S IDEA OF WHAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SELL TO MOSCOW RATHER THAN PROPOSALS SPECIFICALLY APPROVED BY MOSCOW. BUT THEY AGAIN SHOW THE PRIORITY OF THE SOVIET POSITION TO BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESENT RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES AS THE BASIS FOR AGREED REDUCTIONS.

14. KHLESTOV'S STATEMENT THAT THE EAST WAS CONTEMPLATING DROPPING REQUIREMENT FOR REDUCTION OF AIR FORCE MANPOWER CORROBORATES PREDICTIONS THAT THIS MIGHT BE A POSSIBLE EASTERN MOVE IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND GIVES SUPPORT TO THE IDEA THAT THE EAST MIGHT MOVE TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF A COMMON

CEILING IN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER AFTER A WESTERN NUCLEAR
REDUCTION OFFER HAS BEEN PRESENTED (SEE MBFR VIENNA 0394).
THE MOVE TO INCLUDE SOVIET MILITARY ADVISER KAPITONOV IN
US-SOVIET INFORMAL BILATERALS APPEARS TO RESULT FROM PRESSURE
OR INTEREST ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET MILITARY SINCE IT IS
DOUBTFUL GIVEN HIS CHARACTERISTIC STYLE OF OPERATION
THAT KHLESTOV WOULD WANT TO DO THIS ON HIS OWN. END COMMENT.

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